

PELPOP NEWS

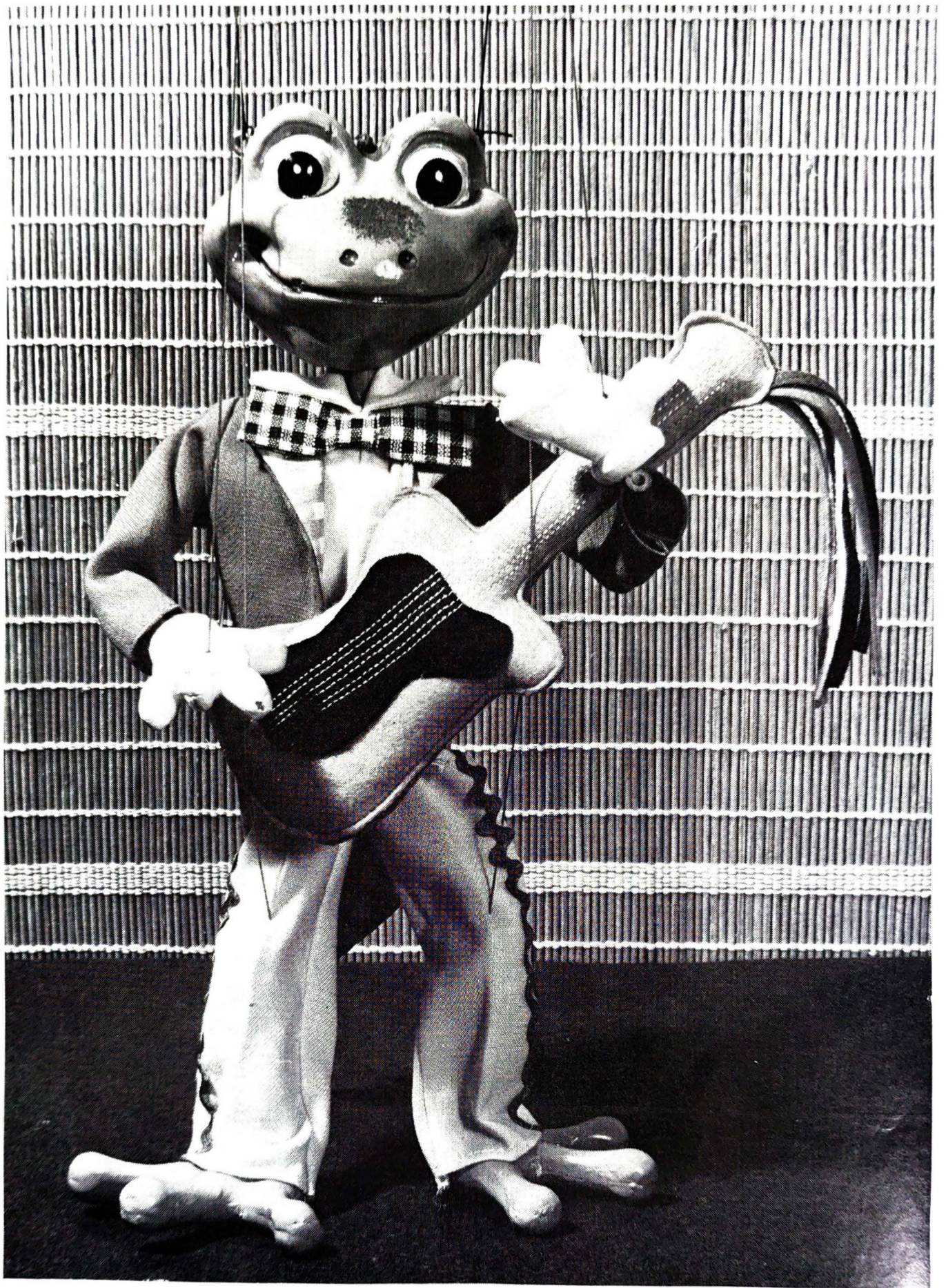
WINTER EDITION 1970 Number 20



Produced by PELPOP

Pelham
PUPPETS

Marlborough, Wiltshire



'Letter from Pelpop'

MARLBOROUGH.
DECEMBER, 1970.

Dear Pelpups,

My Christmas Greetings to you all and to the overseas members I send my usual prosperous puppetry and plentiful wishes for a peaceful year to come. May I take this opportunity of apologising for the late arrival of the summer magazine. I hope you will forgive me because I have been truly punished by all those hundreds of enquiries each asking "Where is my magazine". The summer issue always gets thwarted by holidays—first mine, then the printers and last time we were just very unlucky, together with last minute alterations to cause further delays. In future please allow a little more time before enquiring. Most of you know other Pelpups—if they haven't got their magazine either you can be sure it is delayed. The only time to worry is when your friend has got his and yours hasn't come.

There are three winning plays this time but instead of the usual two puppets for first prize and one for second I am giving one to each of you because they are all of equal merit. So that is one puppet to Glenn Martell for "Sir Launcelot Rides Again", one to Mark Palmer, California, for "Horrors" and one for P. Lurie for "Esmaralda Investigates the Mystery of the Missing Ostrich", certainly plays with a lot of action and promise if padded out. I think most plays I put in are anything but ideal and need this treatment, usually the scenes are too short and there would be more time spent in scene changing than in acting. Do remember to have a good scene changing drill in order to cut this time to a minimum.

I am sorry a number of members have sent in record ideas and poems but both these competitions were announced specially for the last summer magazine. You may enter only those competitions which are announced in the current issue. There are two exceptions—the playwriting and the photograph competitions are permanently in operation. Having said that, I must apologise for announcing no winners of the photographic competition in this issue, on this occasion it will be run over until next summer's magazine. There were only a few entered and none of any great merit.

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Date

NAME

ADDRESS

Now I want to announce a special competition for this issue only. It is a group competition and applies to schools or clubs of no less than five members. There will be two prizes of three puppets each to the two best accounts of their puppet activity. I want to know the name of school or group, master-in-charge or leader, names of all the members and name of the club itself if it has one. A photograph of the stage setting would be advantageous but not necessary, then an account of how you started, a description of stage and puppets, and plays performed, details of special effects and equipment and any other interesting facts about your set-up.

The object of this competition is naturally to encourage group activity. I visualize it won't be long before nearly every school has a thriving puppet club and they will recognise puppetry as one of the most creative and educational forms of art. It is interesting I think to mention that in Czechoslovakia there are well over 3,000 amateur groups performing plays mainly to adults. Most of these groups consist of factory workers and they are provided with stages and equipment in their canteens, but they make their own puppets and scenery, props and effects and produce their own plays. There is a festival every year and great prizes to be won. Such groups are also thriving in schools and tremendous encouragement is given by the authorities as they consider puppetry as highly educational at the same time entertaining. So let us hope more schools follow suit here in this country.

I am pleased to say the Frog (inside front cover) has been elected Toy of the Year in France by "Elle" magazine. The guitar is an addition which can easily be made if you follow the instructions on page 7. The introduction of our puppets into France has been successfully achieved by M. Francis Robbezin, of Paris. There are now over one hundred shops displaying our puppets the most popular characters are the Wolf, Frog, Bimbo, and Clown. In Germany Bimbo and the horse are the leading characters.

Good Luck,



For the benefit of new members, the subscription of 3/- (15p) entitles you to a badge and a year's subscription to the magazine—i.e., two magazines, one on Joining, that is the current copy, and the next issue. They come out in Aug./Sept. and December. If you do not renew you are still a member but you will not receive a magazine.

If you join for five years you will receive ten copies in all.

If on receiving this magazine it is your second copy and you want to continue receiving magazines please renew your subscription on this form as soon as possible.

Subscription for U.S.A. and Canada to cover extra postage:—

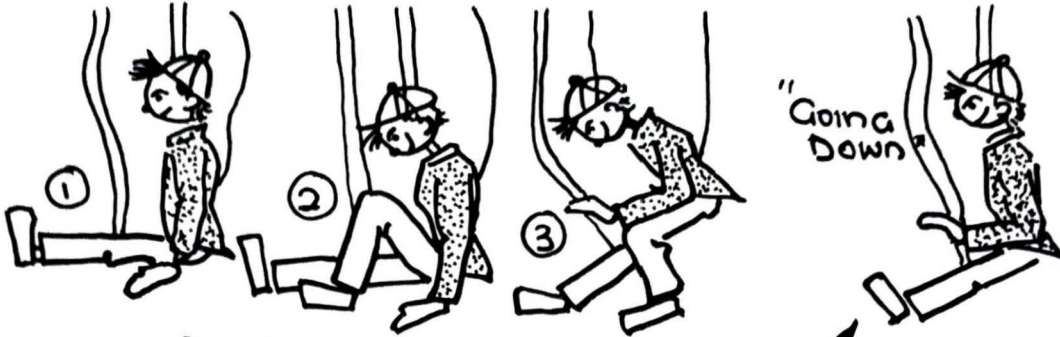
1 year 50 cents
5 years \$2

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Winter Edition 1970 Number 20

PUPPET PRACTICE

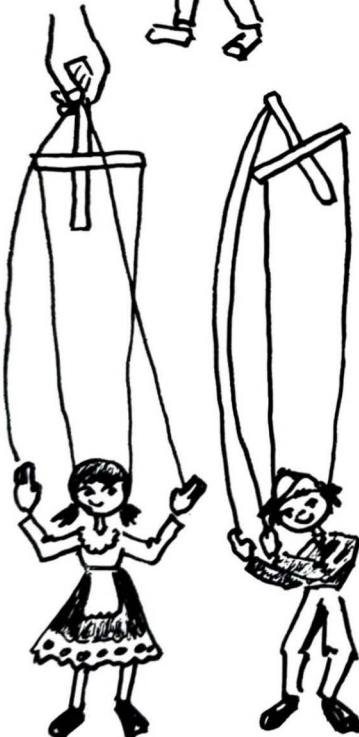
FOR BEGINNERS & SOME OLDER ONES TOO !



WHEN A PUPPET SITS DOWN ON THE FLOOR LIKE THIS DON'T MAKE HIM GET UP IN THE SAME MANNER I.E. JUST YANK HIM UP THERE IS NO SUBTLETY TO THAT. MAKE HIM GET UP IN A NATURAL MANNER AS IF HE IS DOING ALL THE WORK. THAT IS PULL A LEG STRING, AS IN (2) SO THAT HE BENDS HIS KNEE THEN PULL HIM UP. YOU WILL ALMOST HEAR HIM GRUNT.



PUPPETS SHOULD ALWAYS TAKE UP NATURAL BALANCED POSITIONS. YOU SHOULD NEVER GET THE IMPRESSION THAT THE STRINGS ARE THERE TO STOP THE PUPPET FROM FALLING OVER AS YOU DO WHEN YOU SEE A PUPPET LEANING OR LOLLING. THIS IS A SIGN THAT THE PUPPETEER'S ATTENTION HAS WANDERED OR HE IS LIKE THE PUPPET — TIRED !



HERE IS A USEFUL WAY TO MAKE A PUPPET DANCE ON THE STAGE USING ONLY ONE HAND. YOU COULD THEREFORE HOLD ONE IN EACH HAND FOR SAY THE FINALE OR A GAY DANCING CROWD SCENE.

TILT THE FRONT OF THE CONTROL STRAIGHT UP IN THE AIR & HOLD BY THIS BAR WHICH IS NOW VERTICAL. YOU WILL SEE THE HANDS OF THE PUPPET COME UP & BY BOUNCING & ROTATING THE CONTROL FIRST ONE WAY THEN THE OTHER SHE SWIRLS AWAY TO THE MUSIC & LOOKS GOOD. IF YOU ROCK THE HEAD BAR AT THE SAME TIME YOU GET ADDED MOVEMENT OF THE HEAD & ARMS.

BIMBO ANTICS

HOW TO MAKE BIMBO DO A BACKWARDS SOMERSAULT & NOT GET INTO A TANGLE

TAKE THE TWO LEG STRINGS TOGETHER FROM BETWEEN HAND STRINGS. DRAW FORWARD & BOUNCE CONTROL UP & DOWN FOR A LITTLE WHILE SO HE LOOKS AS THOUGH HE IS GETTING READY FOR THE BIG JUMP

ONE! TWO! THREE! JUMP & PULL LEG STRINGS RIGHT UP LOWERING CONTROL UNTIL HANDS ARE ON THE GROUND.

IF YOU GET YOUR FINGERS BETWEEN LEG STRINGS YOU CAN APPLY ALTERNATE PULLS ON THEM TO MAKE HIS LEGS KICK.

YOU CAN DO THIS WITH ANY PUPPET PROVIDED IT IS NOT HOLDING SOMETHING LIKE A BROOM OR A BOTTLE.

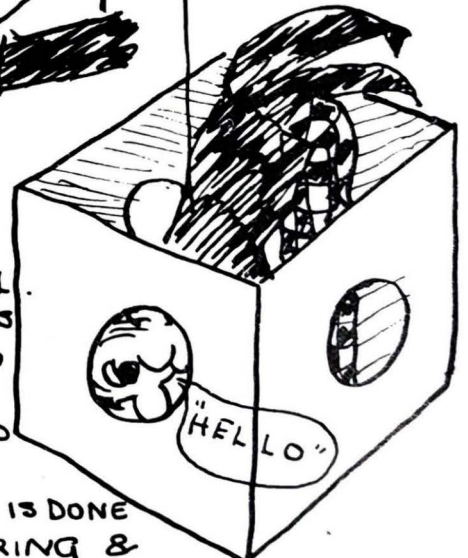
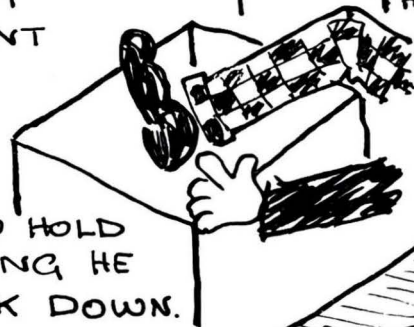
HE LIKES PUTTING HIS FOOT INTO THINGS &

IF IT IS A YOGHURT POT HE WILL GET IT STUCK THERE

OR CLIMBING INTO BOXES

BIMBO HAS A VERY FLEXIBLE NECK JOINT IF YOU HOLD THE BACK STRING & LOWER CONTROL HE WILL LOOK FORWARD. IF YOU HOLD THE NECK STRING HE WILL LOOK DOWN.

BIMBO LIKES TO SIT ASTRIDE A BARREL PARTICULARLY IF IT HAS NO BOTTOM TO IT, SO HE CAN SEE THE UPSIDE DOWN WORLD WHEN HE LOOKS THROUGH IT. THIS IS DONE BY HOLDING NECK STRING & LOWERING CONTROL. ROCK CONTROL TO SHAKE HEAD.

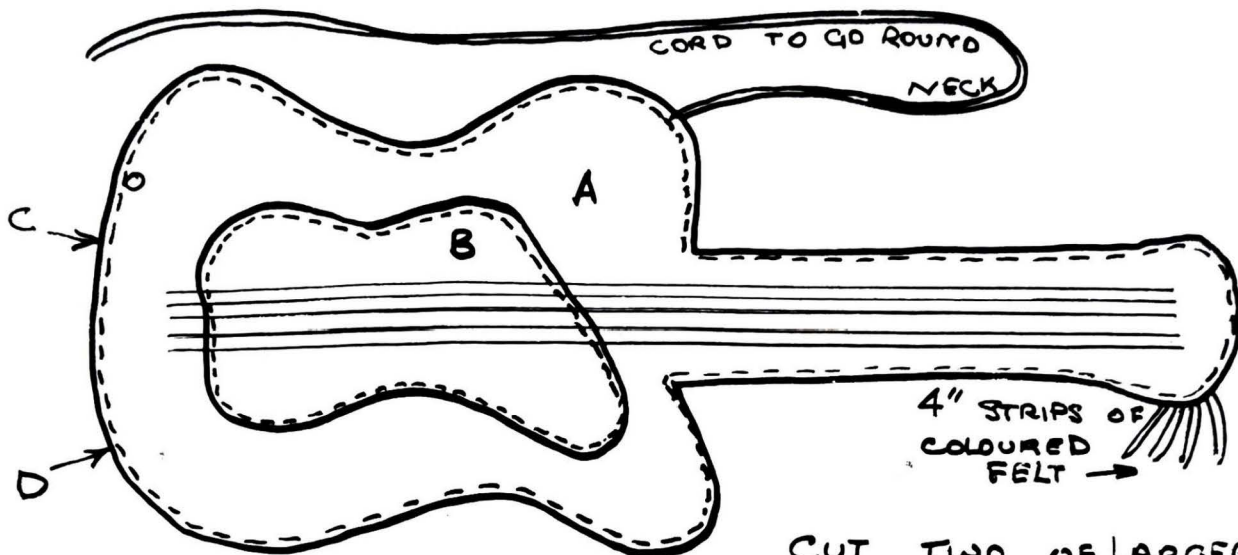


HOW TO MAKE A GUITAR

YOU CAN BUY ODD SQUARES OF COLOURED FELT IN MOST DEPARTMENTAL STORES. THESE ARE VERY USEFUL FOR PUPPET MAKING, THOUGH YOU MUST BE CAREFUL NOT TO IMPEDE THE MOVEMENT OF THE PUPPET. FELT TROUSERS MIGHT RESTRICT THE LEGS FROM BENDING AT THE KNEES — THEY WILL TEND TO DO THE GOOSE STEP.

FELT IS PARTICULARLY USEFUL FOR MAKING HATS GUITARS & OTHER PROPS.

HERE IS A PATTERN FOR A GUITAR, BUT YOU COULD VARY ITS SHAPE AS YOU NEVER SEEM TO SEE TWO ALIKE.



CUT TWO OF LARGER PATTERN A SAY ONE ORANGE & OTHER BROWN & SMALLER PATTERN B SAY IN BLACK. MACHINE B ONTO A & RUN MACHINE LINES OF STITCH UP & DOWN TO INDICATE STRINGS. PLACE THE TWO LARGE PATTERNS TOGETHER & MACHINE ALL THE WAY ROUND EDGE, LETTING IN A CORD FOR GOING ROUND NECK & SOME COLOURED STRIPS OF FELT FOR DECORATION. LEAVE A GAP BETWEEN C & D FOR STUFFING. NOW GET SOME COTTON WOOL OR WADDING & STUFF RIGHT UP THE NARROW PART PACKING IT IN FIRMLY UNTIL IT IS ALL QUITE SOLID. NOW STITCH ACROSS GAP & PUNCH A LITTLE HOLE AS INDICATED THROUGH WHICH YOU PASS THE CORD AFTER IT HAS BEEN ROUND THE NECK & UNDER THE ARM OF THE PUPPET. TIE LIGHT KNOT ONLY TO END OF CORD.

IT IS LIGHT & SOFT & THEREFORE IDEAL FOR THE PURPOSE.



Scene from the "Artist" by JANE PHILLIPS

Puppets into Dancers

by JANE PHILLIPS

Ballet is the human theatrical form which most closely resembles puppet theatre. There are a number of well-known ballets in which dancers actually act the parts of dolls, *Coppelia*, *Petroushka*, *La Boutique Fantasque*, *The Fairy Doll* etc. The style of both art forms is very similar. Both are concerned with the symbolic use of form, colour and movement and both use dancers more as generalisations than as individuals.

A ballet is composed by a choreographer. There are two main types of ballet today. One is the ballet of action which tells a story in mime and movement. The other is the abstract ballet which relies for its effects simply on design, pattern and rhythm. Most ballets depend on music and whether the music is composed in collaboration with the choreographer or handed to him in finished form, his job is to make of it a theatrical performance. In this he is like the producer of a play but he has also the added responsibility of inventing the words or steps through which the dancers speak their parts. The choreographer in the puppet theatre has even greater problems to solve for he has to invent the dancers too. Both, however, must work in the same way essentially in that their task is to illustrate music and that it is the music above all which will point the way and inspire them.

Illustrating music does not mean simply using music as an excuse for meaningless jiggling. Just as a good illustration complements and decorates a text so a ballet should enhance the theme and construction of the music. If, for instance, the music tells a story, it may contain some passages that evoke atmosphere, some themes which denote certain characters in the story and some plain descriptive action sequences. It is essential to understand just how the music is constructed and to play sometimes alongside it, sometimes in opposition to it. One can only do this by listening to a piece over and over, constantly for weeks and months and also doing what research one can into the score, any programme notes, story or ideas it evokes in one's mind.

Then one has also to consider carefully the possibilities and limitations of the puppet theatre. It is pointless to attempt the variety of movement from a puppet that a human dancer can offer. One must select and simplify gesture and take advantage of the non-human characteristics of puppets to add variety and surprise to their limited vocabulary of action.

The puppets themselves should grow like moving sculpture straight from the music and when making them the best way to start is by studying raw materials in relation to music. Springs, elastic, feathers, crepe paper, silk fringe, metals, polythene sponge (to suggest a few) have intrinsic rhythms and suggest growth, breathing, flight, dead leaves, wetness and slime, dignity and stiffness and supple bouncing movements.

Grouping forms the basic design of a ballet and is especially important in the abstract kind. To study this it is interesting to start with a number of similar simple units (for example footprints on a shadow screen) and see what can be done with them. Simply by improvising and making mistakes one can learn a lot and often turn the mistakes to advantage. Marching, formation dancing, the Tiller girl routines for instance, depend on everyone doing the same thing but changing the grouping. More complicated patterns arise when one dancer takes a theme and another proceeds to dance variations on the same theme at the same time. There may be as many dancers as there are instruments in an orchestra each with their own theme woven into the music as in 'Peter and the Wolf', or it may be that one dancer followed by another will take up the same step building up to a grand climax. Even with the simplest figures the variation of grouping can be endless and, provided that the movement is meaningful, it will be interesting in itself to watch.

A puppet speaks first through its appearance. Form, colour and movement are the three keys to a creative approach to puppet theatre and if you are out to avoid realism certain music opens up wider and more imaginative vistas for the puppet than any play based on human voices. Later on human voices can be added in the shape of narrations and later still perhaps the puppets can speak with the stylised voices of castanets or squeakers, but to grasp the language of puppet theatre and exploit the full potential of puppets as surrealistic and abstract creations one should start from mime and dancing alone.

In puppet ballet there is every reason why the scenery should also dance in its own way. Smoke and waves can be effectively suggested by moving silhouettes of waves and clouds cut from card. By moving trees or telegraph poles upstage while keeping a puppet horseman prancing on the spot downstage one can give the impression of someone making a long journey. Snow can be represented

by a few large crystals hung from fishing rods. A fire can be called to life by flickering fingers in red black and yellow gloves to which a few sequins have been glued. Of course it depends on what type of puppet you are operating. Each type poses its own advantages and limitations and it must depend on the music which type you use.

Miming to pop records or attempting Wagner is out of course. The sort of music to look for is descriptive music, either classical or jazz which is scored for a fairly light orchestra and fits in with the intimate size of puppets and puppet theatres. The other important definition is that it should be music with dramatic potentiality. Folk dance music which at first sounds right and is wonderful to dance to may be boring to watch for instance.

The mistake most puppeteers make when choosing ballet music is in being completely insensitive to the composer's aims when writing it. They would hesitate to tear a play to pieces and change the plot entirely but have no such qualms when dealing with a piece of music. Most ballet music is written with either a plot or some descriptive purpose in mind and one must adapt one's puppets to the music to begin with, not the music to the puppets. Most records have helpful programme notes on the back and one can also buy books with the standard plots of ballets together with the composer's name in each case. Then one can study scores. All this should be done before any puppet is conceived. To start with a finished puppet for which a piece of music must be found is useless.

Finally it helps to learn from the techniques of cartoon filming how to lay out a story visually in a series of similar sized frames. If one can picture the puppet stage in the same way a cartoon artist pictures a cinema screen, that is as a flat surface on which anything can be drawn, immediately all sorts of possibilities open out. The same puppet can be duplicated, either as a full figure, or a close up, or one eye, or a silhouette. A story is told by simply presenting a series of images to the spectator which he will link together in his own mind. The art of puppet theatre, like cartoon filming, lies in selection and simplification, forcing an audience to see what is not there by evoking the idea of that thing. The simpler the means of expression, the greater the art. This storyboard approach applies especially when designing for television where it is possible to cut from camera to camera, but can also be used in the theatre with good lighting and possibly black backgrounds. Thus one can play with scale and when the music grows loud use large figures and when the music is soft, shrink those same figures down. Naturally one cannot achieve with three dimensional figures quite the unlimited scope of line drawings when animated, but one can go much further than puppet theatres have so far gone in this field. And what about the possibilities of colour music and of projected images mixed with puppets? Music can act as a catalyst to all such experiments if it is to be of value today. Puppet theatre must keep pace with the modern techniques and materials of rival theatrical and film forms of masked and abstract theatre. We could learn a lot by turning our puppets into dancers.

Jane Phillips

Suggested Routines and Ideas

by MR. BURKE of Magictrix, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs.

If you are a Ventriloquist, then use the puppets in the standard manner. There are plenty of books available on Ventriloquism for the beginner, the finest of these being 'Ventriloquism from A to Z, by Douglas Craggs'. In this Douglas emphasizes the need to learn the correct method from the very beginning, then goes on to teach it—a step at a time—in any easy to understand language. Lastly he provides two appendices of specially prepared ventriloquial dialogue upon which a performer can base numerous routines of his own. This and many other books on the subject are available from Magictrix. Further details for a S.A.E.

WITH A PUNCH & JUDY SHOW. If you perform the ever popular Punch and Judy show, you will find that the following routine with Katie is a real winner. With a slight adaptation it could be used for Cornelia instead.

Mr Punch has been up to his usual antics, and is busy bragging that everyone is afraid to fight him. One or two boys in the audience will offer to fight him any time, so he addresses his remarks to them:

PUNCH: "If you want to fight—come up here and fight. There you are I told you everyone was afraid—no one, dare come up."

As he talks and struts about—bring Katie up behind his back. The children will yell and point, saying there's someone behind him. Mr Punch turns to look but Katie bobs back down before she can be seen. This is repeated a few times. You will find it is a great shouting business.

Finally Katie stays up, but no matter which way Mr Punch turns, she keeps out of sight behind him. Eventually, after lots of fun, Mr Punch catches Katie—then nearly jumps out of his skin with fright.

PUNCH: "Oh it's a horrible Caterpillar—go away, go away. If you don't go away I will fight you".

Katie takes no notice, instead she closes her eyes and appears to go to sleep.

PUNCH: "Oh dear, Oh dear, I can't wake her up—how can I fight her when she is asleep? I know, if she should wake up and open her eyes, let me know at once boys and girls, then I'll fight her".

Now follows the business of every time Mr Punch looks away, Katie opens her eyes, the children all yell their heads off at Punch—but by the time he realises what they are trying to tell him, Katie has closed her eyes again. This can be built up into a riot of fun and laughter as any experienced kiddies entertainer will know. Finally Mr Punch catches Katie with her eyes open and chases her away with his stick. It will be realised that other puppets could be used with Katie or Cornelia for the above routine, you are not limited to Mr Punch.

A few other suggestions with Katie and Cornelia

If you do a Vent. routine you can do much the same as the above using a Boy doll (Supy would be ideal) together with Cornelia. (Or perform it in a 'Fit Up' and you don't need to be a Vent.)

Cornelia flickers her eyes at Supy, getting him all worked up. There's plenty of opportunity for gags and bits of business here. He tries to make a date with her—but she doesn't answer. He shouts and rages—still no reply. Finally Cornelia closes her eyes and goes to sleep. Every time Supy looks away, she opens her eyes and flickers them at someone (a boy or man in the audience). When Supy turns to look—it's too late, her eyes are closed again.

Another good idea along the same lines is to do a sort of Hilda Baker routine—Supy does all the talking (or Boggles if you wish two girls) Cornelia remains dumb, she just nods and shakes her head from time to time, flickering her eyes at the men etc. Finally Supy sings a song and Cornelia slowly closes her eyes and goes fast asleep. Two people could operate these dolls—one doll each (if you have an assistant)—and present a very novel and unusual act along these lines.

A very similar routine could be presented by a single performer, he himself does the talking, either to Cornelia or about her. The puppet never replies of course, just nods or shakes her head in the manner of a 'dumb blonde' and flirts with the men in the audience with her eyes. Finally the performer sings her to sleep—or starts to tell her a story and off she goes to sleep in the middle of it. A good Comedian or Magician could work out an excellent routine based on this idea.

Yet another suggestion—this time for the magician. You introduce Cornelia as your glamorous new assistant. She holds silks, ropes, cards, etc for you. She could choose cards from the pack spread across a table or stand. Or she can become a mindreader, correctly picking out a card selected by a member of the audience (while her eyes are shut so she cannot see). This simple but effective idea could put 'new life and novelty' into many old card tricks.

An Idea with the other Dolls

What follows is an idea that is original with the author. It has already proved to be very practical indeed in his own kiddies show. It is capable of many variations.

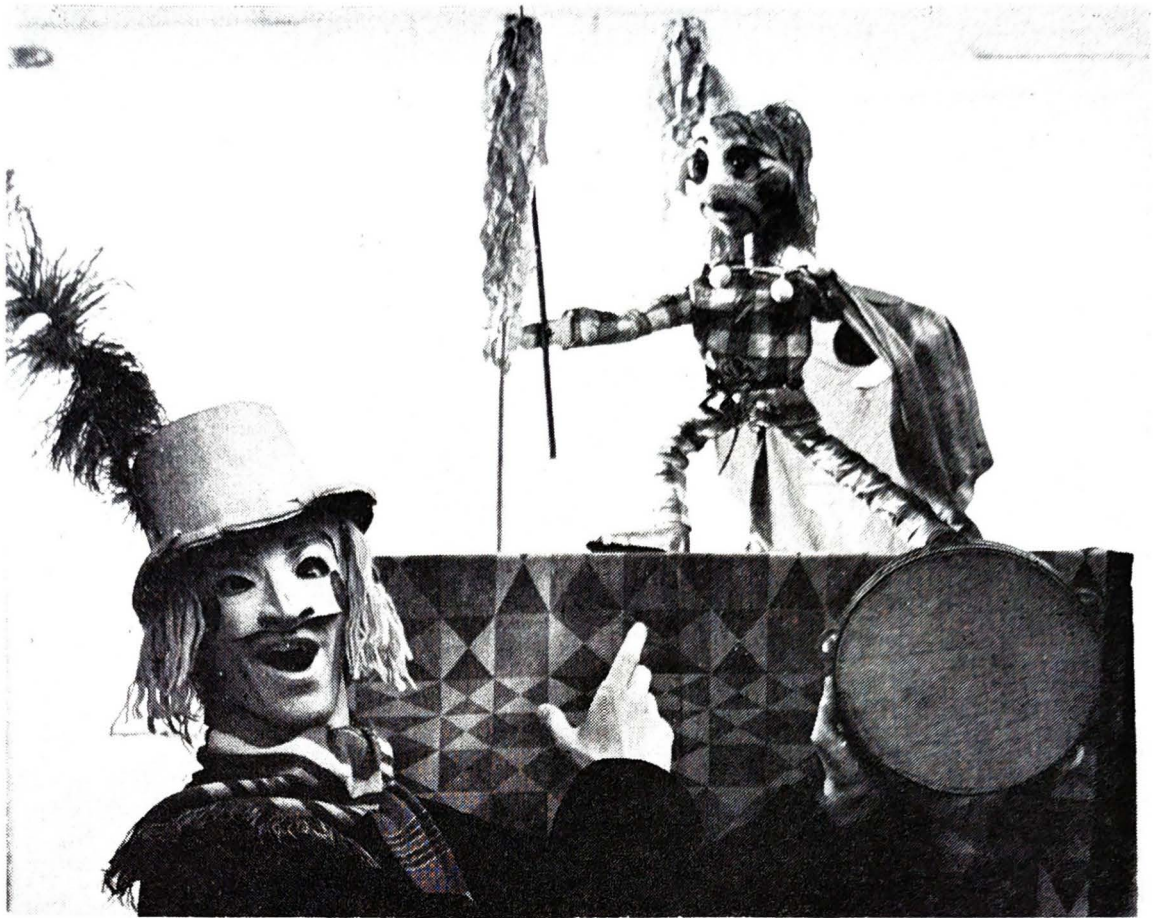
Basically the idea is NOT to do the Ventriloquism yourself, but to get a small child from the audience to do so. You ask for a child "who wishes to learn how to become a Ventriloquist to show their hands." You then select a likely looking boy (or girl). Don't pick them too young, I find about 8 or 9 years old is ideal. The patter given is exactly as used by the author (having gone through many stages and variations, the idea is still being developed). This suits my style of working. It should only be used as a framework for your own routine.



1

Barry Smith's Theatre of Puppets

- 1 One of Barry Smith's most popular creations "The Boodles", or the puppet that makes itself. This is a stick puppet and the operator's own hand. Starting with a bare wooden ball and a gloved hand, the creature is built up before your eyes and then disintegrates and finally crawls off as a sort of insect.
- 2 Barry Smith's version of the old Cornish Mummer's Play, "St. George and the Dragon". Here is St. George challenging all comers, operated by Barry Smith, with Christopher Leith as the Showman.
- 3 A scene from "The Chrystal Palace", an adaptation of a mid-Victorian musical extravaganza, and performed by "Theatre of Puppets", the Company directed by Barry Smith, Christopher Leith and Alan Judd. Here the malevolent Duchess Grognon, having thrown her rival down the well is confronted by Envy and the Good Fairy Chrystallina.



2

3



Sir Launcelot Rides Again

THREE SCENES

Cast: QUEEN, KING, SIR LAUNCELOT (any male character), DRAGON.

SCENE ONE

Medieval room, King is sleeping on throne.

CURTAINS

(Queen enters).

QUEEN: HORACE!

(King awakens startled)

KING: Yes?

QUEEN: That dumb, impudent, overstuffed, ugly-horrible monster has been in the royal garden again! When are you going to do something about it?

KING: Okay, Okay, Where is Sir Launcelot?

QUEEN: He's in the parlour with the Princess.

KING: Well send him here!

(Queen exits and a few seconds later S.L. enters).

S.L: Yes Sire? *(bows).*

KING: I'm sending you on another mission.

S.L: And what is that Sir?

KING: Have you heard about that dragon that has been attacking the royal garden?

S.L: Yes.

KING: Well the queen has been nagging me all afternoon about the dragon. So she has asked me to send you to either kill him or send him away for good.

S.L: Yes Sire, But you know that I can't stand the sight of blood. *(pleadingly).*

KING: NOW NO BUTS, thats an order and besides if you do not get rid of that dragon then I won't allow you to see my daughter any more! And thats final.

S.L: Yes, Sire.

CURTAINS

SCENE TWO

FOREST

CURTAINS

(S.L. enters).

S.L: That King is always giving me the dirty jobs, Ohhhhh my feet! *(picks up feet one at a time).* I hope I find that dragon in time or I'll have to cancel my date with the Princess tonight. Here Dragon, Oh h-e-r-e Dragon? *(heavy steps are heard).* That dragon sounds as if he's coming from that way, *(points).* So I'm going the other way. *(King's voice is heard echoing)* If you don't get rid of the Dragon then I won't allow you to see my daughter anymore! All right, I'll kill the dragon or my name isn't Sir Dancelot, er, I mean Sir Launcelot. *(Dragon enters).*

(humbly). Nice Dragon, nice Dragon?

DRAGON: I'm so hungry I think I'll eat you!

S.L: Please don't! I don't taste good at all!

DRAGON: Never mind, I don't want to eat you I'd rather have cabbage and carrots from the royal garden. I think I'll go there now.

S.L: NO! DON'T!

DRAGON: Why not? It's none of your business where I eat and besides I want to eat there.

S.L: I know where there's a better garden where there's better food which is right in the next kingdom.

DRAGON: Is that so? How do I get there?

S.L: You just go straight that way to the fence tipped over then turn left and follow the signs.

CURTAIN

SCENE THREE

Same setting as in scene 1 only King is awake.

S.L: *(enters).*

KING: Hello Sir Launcelot. Have you killed the dragon?

S.L: Yes Sire.

KING: Tell me about your conquest.

S.L: Oh it's not much. I just saw the dragon coming at me then we got into a fight and I cut off his head.

KING: I've decided to give you a reward.

S.L: And what is that Sire!

KING: My daughter's hand in marriage!

S.L: Thank You, Oh Thank You. . . .

CURTAINS

THE END OF THIS STORY

H * O * R * R * O * R * S

Characters: McBOOZLE, POLICEMAN, MOTHER DRAGON, SKELETON, ASSORTED BYSTANDERS

SKELETON: (*Still out of McBoozle's sight*). Good, I'll take the secret passage and I'll catch him.

SCENE ONE

CURTAIN

(*Night time. Scene shows lighted pub exterior on one side of stage. Road leading off stage is forked with one part painted on scenery showing it going off in the distance*).

McBOOZLE: (*Standing outside pub*). I wonder which road to take? I wonder if I should take this road (*points at one fork*) or this road (*points at the other fork in road*).

BYSTANDERS: (*Whispering quietly together*). McBoozle must be a little drunk or he'd know to take the right road home and not the road to the haunted house. Hey, look, here comes a policeman, maybe he'll direct McBoozle.

POLICEMAN: McBoozle, you're drunk. And if I see you like this again, I'll write your name down in my little black book. Now just go on home.

McBOOZLE: You and your daft little book!

POLICEMAN: McB-o-o-z-l-e. . .

McBOOZLE: I'm going, I'm going, already.

BYSTANDERS: Oh no, he's taking the wrong road. McBoozle, that's the wrong road.

McBOOZLE: It's my house I ought to know which road to take.

(*Close curtains to indicate brief lapse of time. While curtains are closed drop background in of haunted house. Open curtains to show McBoozle headed toward haunted house. McBoozle is singing some Scottish song and hiccuping a bit. Close curtains*).

SCENE TWO

(*McBoozle is now inside the haunted house. Lighting is dim. Old furniture scattered around, some is covered with sheets, dusty look*).

McBOOZLE: This place looks very homely.

(*Skeleton walks on stage where he can just be seen by audience*).

SKELETON: Blaaahhhh. An intruder. I must think of a scheme to catch him. I've got it. Mother Dragon, Mother Dragon. (*Mother Dragon comes on stage and whispers together with the skeleton*).

MOTHER DRAGON: (*hissing, walks up to McBoozle*). My Massster sssaysssss I have to eat you up.

McBOOZLE: (*Thinking quickly whips out handkerchief and pours whisky from his bottle on it*). Here start with my hand. (*Holds out hand with handkerchief on it*).

MOTHER DRAGON: Yum, yum, this will taste good. (*She takes large bite of McBoozle's hand, staggers off stage roaring drunk*).

McBOOZLE: That hurt, if I must say it myself. I think I'd better get out of here.

SCENE THREE

(*Another part of the house. In the corner of this room there is a cauldron. Skeleton and McBoozle back onto the stage from opposite sides and hit backs*).

McBOOZLE: AaaaHHHHHHH! I've got to hide somewhere. (*jumps into cauldron*).

SKELETON: Now I've got you where I want you. I'm going to eat you.

McBOOZLE: Are you sure that you're going to eat me?

SKELETON: Yes, I'm sure.

McBOOZLE: Are you sure that you are sure.

SKELETON: Yes, I'm sure that I'm sure. (*Stamps foot in an aggravated way*).

McBOOZLE: Well, if you're sure that you're sure, can I have a last wish?

SKELETON: Well, o.k. . . What in the world are you doing? (*McBoozle pours scotch all over himself and in pot*).

McBOOZLE: I'm pouring some of my 100 proof scotch, because if I'm going to be eaten I want to be well seasoned.

SKELETON: (*taking sip of brew and makes deep hollow sound in throat and head shoots up in air until it cannot be seen. Head reappears*).

McBOOZLE: Come on Mr. Skeleton, I think I have a plan up my sleeve.

CURTAIN

SCENE FOUR

(*Same setting as in Scene One. This time the Pub light is off*).

McBOOZLE: Here comes the policeman. Hide behind me. (*Skeleton hides behind McBoozle*). Hi, Mr. Policeman.

POLICEMAN: Well, McBoozle, looking a little more sober, I see, but maybe I should put your name in my little black book. (*Skeleton pops up behind McBoozle*) AAAAAHHHHHHH!

McBOOZLE: Chase him until I get home, Mr. Skeleton. (*Skeleton takes off after POLICEMAN*). Home sweet home, here I come.

CURTAIN

(*Note: Two or three bystanders are enough*).

Esmaralda Investigates: The Mystery of the Missing Ostrich

By P. LURIE

Characters: ESMARALDA, (*Gypsy*); POLICEMAN; IZ and OZ; DRAGON; BABY OSTRICH (*Home made*).

Special Prop: 1 Jar (*Plastic, transparent*) with electric flash attachment hidden within. (*See drawing*).

SCENE ONE

Policeman on stage Left.

Scenery—Police station.

Esma. enters stage Right.

POLICE: Hello Esmaralda, how're you today?

ESMA: Fine thanks, how're you?

POLICE: In the best of health.

ESMA: Why did you want me to come to the station?

POLICE: Do you remember, a few months ago, you solved The Mystery of the Fake Diamonds?

ESMA: I don't think I'll ever forget it. What fun and excitement we both had. I still have most of the reward money put away in the bank.

POLICE: Well, as you made such a huge success of investigating the forgeries, I thought you might be able to help us solve this mystery.

ESMA: How can I help you?

POLICE: An ostrich is missing!

ESMA: Pardon. You can't be serious!

POLICE: I am. Will you help us again?

ESMA: I think so. You know how I like animals.

POLICE: That's wonderful. Please could you go to the Ostrich Cage at the Zoo, and Iz, the missing ostrich's wife will give the details.

ESMA: Thanks for asking me. I'll do the BEST I can! (*Exit Right*).

CURTAIN

SCENE TWO

The Zoo. Stage is divided by high railings, separating Ostriches from spectators. Cage on Stage Right.

ESMA: (*Entering from left*). This must be the place. (*She sees the ostrich crying on ground*). Yes, here I am. (*Walks to cage*). G-good morning Iz!

Iz: (*Sobbing*) Good morning. Can you help me find Oz? I'm so worried about him.

ESMA: Most good wives are worried about their husbands. Please tell me what happened.

Iz: It was like this;

(*Stage darkens, ESMA goes to left corner and sits*). I lay down and tried to get some sleep. I fell asleep very soon. Unknown to me, this is what happened. (*Sleeps in corner nearest railings*).

(*Oz comes up to her, kisses her, walks to jar, looks in. STAGE LIGHTS OUT, BANGS AND CRASHES HEARD, FLASHES, STAGE LIGHTS ON DIM. Oz is off stage. Iz awakens*).

(*FINALLY STAGE LIGHTS ON FULL*).

Iz: (*Standing*). Well that's how it happened. It was only then that I noticed the new jar. I'm too scared to go near it!

ESMA: (*Getting up*). I'll go near it and see what it is. Will that make you feel better?

Iz: Of course.

(*Esma bends over jar, LIGHTS ALL OFF, FLASHES and CRASHES, LIGHTS ON, ESMA GONE*).

Iz: Goodness gracious me. HELP, HELP, H-E-L-P.

CURTAIN

SCENE THREE

Witches Cave. Same railings as previous scene. On left side is dragon, right is Oz and ESMA

DRAGON: (*Crying*). Oooo, ooo, Oh dear, nobody likes me, Boo-hoo, I'm so unhappy!

Oz: Don't cry Dragon. If you would let us out, WE would love you. You could come back and live with us at the Zoo. Many people would see you and love you.

DRAGON: But I'm supposed to keep you prisoner for my evil mistress, the Witch. She wants to use you two for her ghastly experiments.

ESMA: Please Mr. Dragon, be kind and let us go. Come with us and you'll never be unhappy again.

DRAGON: Well I know I shouldn't, but I will. I'll just say the magic words, and then the bars will disappear—

Hic, Haec, Hoc, Me, Mihi, May,

Make these bars to go away!!

(*Railings whipped into air*).

Oz & Es: Hooray, you've set us free! Hooray for Mr. Dragon.

(*The two climb on the DRAGON's back, DRAGON is lifted by manip. with other puppets on back*).

CURTAIN

SCENE FOUR

Zoo. (OSTRICHES, ESMA & DRAGON on stage).

Iz: I would very much like to thank you, Mr. Dragon. I hope you'll be happy living with us here.

DRAGON: I'm sure I will.

Oz: Lets all give Mr. Dragon three hearty cheers. Hip hip etc.

ALL: Hooray etc.

DRAGON: (*Sobbing tears of joy*). Y-y-our all s-s-so n-n-nice!!!

Iz: Oz, I-I've got s-something here of yours!

Oz: What??

Iz: This. (*BABY OSTRICH toddles on stage*). (*Enter POLICEMAN*).

POLICE: Good-day all. Iz, I see you've got your husband back, thanks to Esmaralda. But who's this. It looks like—a Dragon!

DRAGON: I am a Dragon.

Oz: Thanks to Mr. Dragon, Esmaralda and I were able to escape. We're very grateful to him, aren't you, Constable?

POLICE: Of course I am. Mr. Dragon, do you realise that soon you will be very well known all over the world. And what's more, you're going to make this Zoo and town famous. We will put you right next door to Iz and Oz and their baby. I know you want to be near them. O by the way, before I go, I must remember to remove that jar and bury it.

ESMA: Well all's well that ends well. Good-bye everybody. (*Waves*).

ALL: Good-bye Esmaralda, thank you, Bye-bye!! (*All wave*).

THE END

Pelpups Write

PHILIP WOOLLEY.—I would like to know if some years ago on a film called “Animal Magic”, a brief film was made in your factory showing the different departments there are. At that time I was not, however, very much interested in puppetry, but this film sparked it all off. From that day forward I have been extremely keen on all kinds of puppetry.

Yes, this was a film taken in our factory with Johnnie Morris interviewing the frog.

All the way through my school terms, most of the other boys in my year have classified me as stupid because I have puppetry as my hobby. Fortunately, for me I have managed to completely put these kind of thoughts and feelings out of my head. If some of them knew how much pleasure and enjoyment that can be gained from this kind of hobby I'm sure that they would take it a little more seriously. At school, also, in our English lessons we sometimes have to do a kind of “Talk” on any interesting subject. I, as you may guess, picked puppetry for my third time and to my amazement my audience took it wonderfully and I scored 18/20, which would in my C.S.E. English examination give me a Grade I Pass. So perhaps you now know why I keep up my hobby of puppetry.

The successful entertainer is someone to be envied both for his skill and ability to earn. The Art of Puppetry demands more skill and ability to create than is required in the live theatre.

PETER ELLIS.—1970 has been a good year for my puppets. At Christmas I got my new theatre which is made of Dexion and when it is built up the stage is 6ft. long, 6ft. high and 2ft. 4ins. wide. The proscenium is 4ft. 6ins. by 2ft. This year at the beginning of the year I, with the help of a friend did a variety show at a coffee morning. We raised £2 for the coffee morning. Soon after, we did a show “Snow White” in my bedroom to about ten children. We raised 18/- for our funds. By now, our theatre had a name “The Aquarius Puppet Theatre”. Now I engaged the help of another person, and just recently we performed a show at a Garden Party at a school. We did three performances and there was about 100 children at each performance. We made £5 for the school funds. The show we did was “Rumpelstiltskin”. The first performance was absolutely hopeless, nobody could hear a word! because there was a Discotheque in the Art Room next door to the class room that we were performing in. The discotheque was very very loud and we could hear it in our class room, as if two record players (or more) were turned on in the same room! We had our tape recorder and record player turned up to full volume and we could hardly hear it! After the first scene all the children in the front row got off their seats and came to the front of the theatre and started touching the puppets and watching us working the puppets! It was very embarrassing. This stopped the other people from seeing so they stood on their chairs. It was generally chaotic! Anyway, the second and third performances went well, because we asked if the discotheque could be turned down.

Our latest show was “Summer Time” a variety show which we performed two weeks ago in my bedroom. It was going quite well until—catastrophe—during the middle of the first act the tape recorder started to go down (the voices got deeper and deeper until it finally stopped) it took about ten minutes to rectify the fault!

JILL SHOULER.—Recently two friends and I performed a short puppet play “Alice in Fairytale Land” to our friends and relations. We put together a rough theatre and used a black backcloth for the basis for our scenery. On this we pinned paper trees, houses, doors etc. for scenery. Although between us we only had five puppets by dressing them up we managed to create many characters, ranging from Aladdin the Sleeping Beauty and Cinderella to a Prince, Jack (of the Beanstalk) and Red Riding Hood. Altogether we raised 8/3d. for charity by selling refreshments and programmes. Now I am planning six short sketches which I can perform by myself to raise more money. I have four puppets, Gypsy, Fritzi, Yogi Bear and Ermimtrude. As before I am using a theatre made out of odd bits of furniture and the black backcloth. If the sketches are successful I will try to persuade my father to make me a proper theatre.

RICKY WALES.—I have met another Pelpup who is as keen as me. He is 15 and his name is Terry Bartlett and I met him when I went to see the Cap and Bell puppet company. He knows Violet Philpot and I met her there as well. I have also recently met John Wright at the Little Angel Theatre and he signed the book he wrote, which I have, and said he may write another. I wish

someone would write a series of books on puppets. One on scenery as people are always getting in trouble because the scenery is badly made. Another book on lighting telling where you may get dimmers and so forth, also a book on costumes and puppet design, as in all the puppet books I have all they do is tell you how to make a hat or a boot, not how to make a witch have flowing garments. And a book on stage management, these books printed by Puffin Books instead of hard back, which cost so much. I read somewhere that Jan Bussell and Ann Hogarth used to do shows at Christmas in big shops like Bentalls, Harrods and Dickens & Jones, to the children while their mothers shopped in peace, and that is what we are thinking of doing.

P. BROADHEAD.—We are sending this letter to tell you of an improvement we have made on the Old Lady, a puppet which you manufacture. The improvement is a string which is attached to the bottom of her mop. We find that this gives greater control over the mop.

ANGELA PATERSON.—My brother and I have started thinking about Christmas productions. Last year we did Hans Anderson's "The Little Match Girl". We only used one puppet for this and made the other figures out of cardboard. Mitzi was dressed in blue cotton rags and a wig. We only needed one scene, this was the street at night. For the visions we painted a see-through material and dangled a white silhouette (on strings) and pulled it slowly up until it was out of sight. This gave the impression of the soul leaving the body.

MARTIN ISLES.—While I am writing may I include some recent record suggestions that other club members would surely find useful:

1. The BBC produce two LP records with sound effects of various sorts—rain, wind, cars, clocks, aeroplanes, footsteps, traffic, crowds etc. They are produced by the BBC and I believe they can be obtained straight from them.

2. A recent show proved that the Magician performing tricks to the hit "Groovin' with Mr. Bloe" is very entertaining.

3. I think it should be pointed out that EMI produce many Pinky and Perky EP records, and LPs as well, besides the couple mentioned in the magazine.

4. I have bought the Music for Pleasure (EMI) LP No. MFP 1368 for my Diddymen (it's Ken Dodd and the Diddymen) and many tracks would be suitable for other puppets.

5. For those with the Fireball XL5 puppets, the Century 21 (Pye) record No. MA100 "Journey to the Moon" would be helpful and similarly for those with the Magic Roundabout characters the two Magic Roundabout EPs might be useful (CBS EP6398 "Magic Roundabout (1)" and CBS EP6399 "Magic Roundabout (2)"). I am off to do a show now this afternoon at a birthday party, and shall be including one of the other record suggestions from the magazine "Aquarius" with the Gypsy—it gives me a chance to use her as she has not seen much action recently. It's funny how some characters lie low for a while, then suddenly a part pops up for them and out they come—it must be rather like real life acting, only an out of work puppet has a much easier life. The Schoolmaster also features in this afternoon's show, with a new lease of life, minus cane and mortar board, as Mr. Theodore Rouge, fashion designer and friend of Lady Penelope.

GAYNOR MAINWARING.—I have five puppets and my cousin has two. Together we produced a marvellous puppet show. We had permission to use a small concert hall. The name of the group is called The Chipanets. Altogether we raised £7.7.0. for charity.

CHRISTOPHER READING.—During the summer I visited the Little Angel Marionette Theatre and would recommend any other Puppets living in London to take a visit. The productions are well varied and well produced and the puppets are really marvellous. After the show they let a few people backstage to see the puppets close up and I am pleased to say that I was lucky enough to be one of these both times I went. My own troupe isn't going too badly and I am now making all my puppets' strings detachable so that their costumes can be changed from time to time. I am also trying the vertical control and I am pleased to say that this type of control is equally as good as your horizontal type, if not better, I find that also the hands are easier to control.

JIM LOEWEN.—Last week I put on a show for a birthday party. It went very well indeed. I have found that children like scary puppets like the witch and skeleton and funny ones like the frog and Supy, my ventriloquial puppet. They didn't enjoy the story as much as the parts before and

after the show when the puppets talked to them. Just a word to members of the club, don't judge all the puppets by their pictures in the catalogue, they look better in real life. I saw some American puppets in a store last week, compared to Pelham Puppets they are clumsy, awkward, and very ugly. Your puppets are still the best.

DAVID LEECH.—I have thirty puppets now, twelve Pelham Puppets and the rest larger, home-made characters. I have quite a variety of puppets including a "Pop" group called the Astronauts, the popular television character Catweazle, Pinky and Perky, a giant Indian four feet tall and a dragon over four feet long. Two puppets I have just added to my collection are made from Christmas decorations, I call them "temporary puppets" as their "lives" only last the few months around Christmas. They are called Swinging Star and Caterabi-Fram, they may seem "unprofessional" to you, but their originality proves them to be successful. I have enclosed drawings and diagrams to explain what they look like and how they work, I hope you like them. This year I appear to be doing very well with my performances and Supy's act (I call him Edward) makes a change from the marionettes. I usually receive about fifteen to twenty requests in the two months before Christmas but this year I've already received nineteen requests and October has only just left us behind. My shows are very popular around my home town and I have several newspaper (local) articles with requests for shows as a result. I have a list of my shows from 1968 including a television performance on the Tingha and Tucker Talent Theatre in which I gained third prize. With this list I have a complete record of my performances including over a dozen newspaper articles and photographs.

PETER LURIE.—The next reason for writing is to congratulate you on two of your puppets. They are the most simple of your puppets—Iz and Oz. I find them the most versatile and expressive puppets you have ever made. In every show I try to include one of them as they are very very popular. Lately I have been asked specially to include them in the shows.

I quite agree with you—and yet they are amongst the cheapest puppets in the range.

STEPHANIE OLTON.—About two months ago Timothy Coppeard, his mum, dad and brother and I went to see a puppet show at Guildhall, they had marionette puppets first, then rod puppets, then glove puppets which they did a play called The Egg and that was a very good one. Then we had rod puppets again and last of all we had two extremely good puppets, they were four years old and you pulled a string and they changed into different puppets. The first one was a sailor and when you pulled a string it turned into an aeroplane with a head sticking out of the top. The second one was a dwarf and this one I preferred to the other one—when you pulled a string the little lantern that the dwarf was holding lit up and when you pulled another string it turned into a tall wizard. The wizard had a white robe on with a tall pointed hat.

MANDY LEIGH.—I have not seen a footballer puppet in the Pelham collection. I enclose my idea of a footballer puppet. I have a few Pelham Puppets and I think with a few adjustments it could join your collection.

ERIC DAVIES, HAMILTON, CANADA.—I would like to enter my entries in the Record Contest, as below:—

1. The Clock that Went Backwards from the Childrens record Guild 45CRG 5016, characters in order of story below:—
SM Girl, SM Boy, 2 Cinderellas, 2 Prince Charming, King, Queen, Prince Charming, Cinderella.
3 Wizards, homemade cavemen, JC. Mother.
2. Camelot (instrumental) by King Richards Fluegel Knights Spartan Records 45, King on Harpsichord, (Toy piano can be used) 3 Prince Charmings with trumpets.
3. In the year 2525 Zager and Evans, RCA 74-0174, Giant, Skeleton 33 speed.
4. Death of a Clown by the Seagulls, Date Records 45, 2-1573, SS Clown lying on ground, Bimbo, SM Clown singing while standing over SS Clown.
5. Time Goes Backwards by Jim and Jean, Verve Forecast Records 45, KF 5073. SM Girl and Boy.
6. Haunted House by Raftsman 3 Melbourne Records, 45, WG 3267, Skeleton, Wizard and Wicked Witch.

7. To Sir With Love by Ray Bryant (instrumental) Cadet Records, 45, C-5598, Minstrel playing piano.
8. Eeney, Meeny, Miney, Moe, by Ola and the Janglers, London Records speed 78, 20034 Pinky and Perky.
9. Scarecrow by the Pink Floyd, Capital, 45, 72500 farmer, Hansel scarecrow in middle of stage (scarecrow is not a puppet).
10. Ride Captain Ride, by Blues Image, Atco Records 45, 6746, sailor, with McBoozle on chorus.
11. The Rainmaker by Tom Northcott, New Syndrome Records, 45, 7330 Wizard, Wicked Witch (Wizard singing to Witch).
12. Plastic People by the Fringe, Quality Records 45, 1908X. Wizard with one or more Skeletons dancing around him.
13. Peter's Birthday by World of Oz, Deram Records, 45, DM 85029, SM Boy and Hansel.
14. The Muffin Man by World of Oz, Deram Records, 45, DM 85029, Hansel singing to Gretel (other side of No.13.)
15. Airplane by Peter's Pipers, Philips 45, 40518, Skeleton sings to Wicked Witch.
16. Pied Piper by the Human Beings, Gateway Records, 45, G838-A Pinocchio with a flute.
17. Take a Giant Step, R.C.A. Victor, by the Fountain of Youth, 33, 661024, Giant singing to Wicked Witch.
18. High and Mighty by To-morrow's Keepsake, R.C.A. Victor, speed 33, 57-3442, Giant is singing to Wicked Witch.

I must tell you that my group the Peleteer Puppeteers, is putting on a couple of plays at the local library. The first one is called "The Boy who Didn't Believe in Santa Claus", a play which I wrote myself and the second, hopefully, "A Christmas Carol" with old Scrooge and the gang.

I am putting your entry in as a letter of interest as the competition was closed with the last issue.

The following is a list of Pelpups who would like pen friends:—

KIM HALLON, 9 Third Avenue, Bordesley Green, Birmingham 9. 11 years old, girl, interested in puppets, writing and dogs, from somewhere in America.

JOHN BRYDGES, 26 Palmer N.E., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49505, U.S.A., boy aged 10-12, from anywhere in the world, hobbies puppetry, swimming and stamp collecting.

LYNDA KEILLOH, 105 Tedder Road, R.A.F. Halton, Bucks., girl age 11-12 from anywhere in England, hobbies sewing, knitting, Guides, television, puppetry.

ANDREA CRAIG, "Drumtulla", Thorndyke, Doagh Road, Ballyclare, Co. Antrim, Ireland. From anywhere in the world except the British Isles, English speaking, aged 11-12. Hobbies netball, swimming, singing, puppetry and athletics.

SUSAN ENGLAND, 19 Norton Drive, Fareham, Hants, would like a girl 10-11, from anywhere in the world. Interested in animals, reading, puppets, writing, nature, Brownies.

MARK TAYLOR, 2878 Cromwell Drive, Columbus, Ga. 31906, U.S.A. Boy or girl from Germany, Sweden, Netherlands or France, speaking English, interested in collecting coins and stamps.

BEVERLEY WALSH, 143 Clos-des Sables, St. Brelade, Jersey C.I. Girl, age 11-13, speaking English, interested in hockey, puppetry, dancing and swimming.

DIANA AGNEW, Nicholas Corner, Sibford Tower, Banbury, Oxon, girl aged 14-16 in U.S.A. or Canada, hobbies reading, pop records, fashion and swimming.

DEIRDRE AGNEW, boy or girl, aged 14-16, in U.S.A., Canada or France, speaking English. Hobbies swimming, stamps, pop records.

ANNE COPPERWHEAT, 29 Mousehold Lane, Norwich, Norfolk. A pen friend from anywhere.

ALISON BRACEGIRDLE, 21 Snowdon Drive, Peak Lane, Fareham, Hants, a girl from France, age 13-14, speaking English, hobbies art, animals, puppetry and stamp collecting.

JEREMY WOOD, 29 Compton Avenue, Mannamend, Plymouth, from anywhere in the world, speaking and writing English, 10-12, interested in stamps, swimming, coins, football, photography, and puppetry.

JENNIFER MEARNES, 44 Selbie Drive, Inverine, Aberdeenshire. A girl from anywhere aged 11-12.

LOUISE GODWIN, 6 Rabling Road, Swanage, Dorset. A girl aged 10-11 from Austria, America, Australia or Iceland, hobbies music and puppetry,

SANDRA ERNSTOFF, 56 Lewgars Avenue, Kingsbury, London, N.W.9. A pen friend from anywhere.

The following would like to hear from Pelpups living in their area:—

IAN SMITH, 2 Cooper Close, Worthy Down, Nr. Winchester.

MARTIN HAWTHORN, 88 Clifton Road, Ruddington, Nottingham.

IAN STEWART, 50 School Road, Donnington, Telford, Shropshire.

J. R. H. SAYERS, 15 Baze Hill Road, Rottingdean, Brighton, Sussex.

IRINA ORYSHKEVICH, 1602 New York Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y.